

Nassau Candy eyes expansion, tax breaks

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Photo credit: iStock | Hicksville-based Nassau Candy Distributors Inc. makes chocolate-covered raisins and pretzels, fudge, fruit slices, roasted nuts and hand-dipped chocolate cherries, among others.

A seller of chocolates and gourmet foods wants to expand its complex in Hicksville by the fall.

An attorney for Nassau Candy Distributors Inc. said it hopes to rent and possibly own 300 Duffy Ave. The 127,000-square-foot building would serve as another factory and warehouse for the growing company.

The expansion would add 45 jobs to Nassau Candy's payroll of 310, which is currently spread over five buildings in Hicksville.

"They aren't looking to give up any existing facilities," lawyer Daniel P. Deegan said Wednesday night. "They want to lease an additional property with an option to buy."

He said Nassau Candy is seeking tax breaks from Nassau County, including a sales tax exemption, property tax breaks and a reduction in the mortgage recording tax upon purchase of the building. The company has looked "at other jurisdictions" including New Jersey. It also has operations in California, Michigan and Florida.

"They could be located anywhere else but they want to stay here," Deegan said.

The board of directors of the county's Industrial Development Agency Wednesday night authorized its staff to negotiate an incentive package with Nassau Candy officials. "We are very anxious to see you stay," IDA executive director Joseph J. Kearney said.

Nassau Candy, based on West John Street in Hicksville, sells more than 10,000 items. It makes chocolate-covered raisins and pretzels, fudge, fruit slices, roasted nuts and hand-dipped chocolate cherries, among others.

The business supplies national retailers such as Wal-Mart.

Nassau Candy opened more than 80 years ago, in the 1920s, on Front Street in Hempstead Village. In 1984, the candy and tobacco distributor was purchased by Barry Rosenbaum and his brother-in-law Lesley H. Stier.

The pair expanded manufacturing operations and stopped selling tobacco.